

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



February 8, 2002

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 02-16

TO: COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
CHILD WELFARE SERVICES  
PROGRAM MANAGERS  
COUNTY FISCAL OFFICERS  
COUNTY CHIEF PROBATION  
OFFICERS

**REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL**

- State Law Change  
 Federal Law or Regulation  
Change  
 Court Order  
 Clarification Requested by  
One or More Counties  
 Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: SUPPORTIVE AND THERAPEUTIC OPTIONS PROGRAM (STOP)

REFERENCE: ACL 98-93, COUNTY FISCAL LETTER (CFL), 98/99-56 and CFL 98/99-57

This letter provides:

1. A review of the guidelines and instructions that were outlined in All County Letter 98-93 issued on December 15, 1998 for counties to implement the Supportive and Therapeutic Options Program (STOP) and,
2. An update on the reporting format, plan outline, and due dates for STOP.

The California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) budget for State Fiscal Year 2001/2002 provides approximately \$9.2 million in State General Funds for STOP (All County Fiscal Letter 01/02-21 issued August 1, 2001). These funds require a 30 percent county match. Administrative and case management activities for children through age 18 will continue to be charged to Child Welfare Services. A separate program identifier number (PIN) code has been established for youth over age 18 served through STOP. County allocations and claiming instructions have been issued in County Fiscal Letters 98/99-56 and 57.

**Background Information**

Some families with children exiting the foster care system or with children at risk of foster care placement are not Medi-Cal eligible or for other reasons are unable to access needed services under existing resources and funding streams. When an out-of-home placement terminates, services to the child typically end. Often the child's return to the home creates tremendous stress for the entire family especially when no supportive services are provided. Consequently, the transition fails and the child is returned to out-of-home care. When Medi-Cal eligibility exists, it should be used for services to prevent out-of-home placement or support a child's return home. The STOP funding can be accessed by children who are not Medi-Cal eligible or when children are eligible but services are not reasonably accessible, such as long travel distances or Medi-Cal providers are not available in their area of residence.

## **Program Goals**

Program goals for STOP are:

1. Prevent children from entering or re-entering foster care placements.
2. Promote successful transitioning home.
3. Maximize funding resources for service delivery through collaborative partnerships.

## **Service Goals**

Service goals for STOP include:

1. Provision of supportive and therapeutic services to children and families that prevent initial and subsequent out-of-home placements.
2. Facilitate and support successful transitions back into the home and community.
3. Provide services that are family-centered and community-based.
4. Maintain already established provider relationships where appropriate.
5. Development and/or expansion of services to meet identified needs and ensure accessibility.
6. Assist families in linking with and developing both formal and informal support systems.
7. Develop plans in partnership with children and families to meet their service needs.

The STOP services may include a wide array of service. They can be, but are not limited to, individual counseling, group and family counseling, crisis response, recreational service, respite care, expressive and creative arts therapies, occupational therapy, and anger management.

The STOP funds are not to be used for county staff salaries and benefits or to purchase equipment.

## **Target Population**

The target population includes children/youth (through age 18) and their families who are in need of supportive and therapeutic services to prevent entry or re-entry into out-of-home placement. Children transitioning from out-of-home placement in the Child Welfare and Probation system back to their homes and communities are also included. When qualifying a child for STOP funds, counties must assure that other funding sources are not available. The STOP services may continue to those youth beyond 18 years of age, for up to one year.

## **Service Integration Approach**

To best meet the complex and multiple needs of children and families, collaborative planning and the integration of service delivery efforts are encouraged.

This is an effective and beneficial way to help prevent children from entering or returning to foster care and promotes a successful transition of children back into their homes. Examples of collaborative actions to support STOP may include:

1. Ongoing coordination with the appropriate county agencies or organizations to plan and deliver aftercare and placement prevention services.
2. Participation with education/schools, residential care providers, health services and local service providers (community-based agencies) to plan and deliver integrated mental, social, health, educational, recreational and vocational services.
3. Continuity of care for children transitioning home through the provision of aftercare services. These services can be provided by the facility the child is exiting.
4. Agreements (as appropriate per county policy) with service providers that clearly identify program and fiscal responsibilities.

### **Goals for Maximizing Funding Resources**

STOP funds shall be maximized by:

1. Assuring that these funds do not supplant other sources of funding.
2. Using STOP funds to provide a needed service that is not funded by other sources.
3. Ensuring collaboration among key stakeholders, such as Child Welfare, Probation, Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol Programs.
4. Developing a process to determine the child and family's ability to access other available resources/funding sources.
5. Utilizing STOP funds as outlined in the County Fiscal Letter of 98/99-57 dated January 11, 1999 and All County Letter 98-93 dated December 15, 1998.

### **Annual Report Requirements**

A new STOP report format has been adopted by CDSS. This annual county STOP report is due on October 15 of each calendar year following the end of the previous State Fiscal Year. The counties with signed STOP agreements on file with CDSS will submit the annual STOP report that follows the guidelines and format of the new report format (See attachment A). The annual report addresses the extent to which the goals, objectives and activities stated in each county's STOP agreement have been met. Failure to submit the annual report by the due date may result in suspension of the county's ability to claim its share of the STOP allocation.

### **County STOP Plans**

The STOP plans need to be updated yearly and submitted to the STOP liaison for CDSS by June 15 of each year. See attachment B for information on writing the STOP plan. Any major

changes in the county's STOP plan during the year must be brought to the attention of the STOP liaison for CDSS.

When developing the plan, refer to Attachment B of this letter.

**State Contact**

If you have any questions or need technical assistance, please contact:

Patrick Kelliher, Social Services Consultant III, STOP Liaison  
California Department of Social Services  
Child Welfare Policy & Programs Bureau  
Early Intervention Unit  
744 P Street, MS 19-87  
Sacramento, California 95814  
(916) 323-9707  
[patrick.kelliher@dss.ca.gov](mailto:patrick.kelliher@dss.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

SYLVIA PIZZINI, Deputy Director  
Children and Family Services Division

c: County Welfare Directors Association of California  
Chief Probation Officers of California  
California Department of Mental Health

**SUPPORTIVE AND THERAPEUTIC OPTIONS PROGRAM (STOP)  
REVISED ANNUAL REPORT**

REPORTING PERIOD: State Fiscal Year 20\_\_-20\_\_.  
DUE DATE: OCTOBER 15, 20\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_  
County STOP coordinator \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
P.O. Box or Mail Stop \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Children Served With STOP Funds Through This Reporting Period**

Please report the number of children and youth served with STOP funds.

Total unduplicated count of children and youth age 0-18. \_\_\_\_\_  
A. How many of these children received aftercare services? \_\_\_\_\_  
B. How many of these children received prevention services? \_\_\_\_\_

Total unduplicated count of youth between the ages of 18-19. \_\_\_\_\_  
A. How many of these youth received aftercare services? \_\_\_\_\_  
B. How many of these youth received prevention services? \_\_\_\_\_

**Terminology**

Aftercare - A service or support provided, via STOP, which helps the child or youth already in an out-of-home place return home. In some instances STOP funds may be used to help a child briefly step into a lower level of care before ultimately returning home.

Prevention - A service or support provided via STOP that assists the child or youth already at home to remain there.

**STOP Expenditures and Claims**

Please list the STOP funds claimed each quarter in SFY 20\_\_-20\_\_ (reporting period) and the county match.

Quarter	Claims made to State	County Matching Funds
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	\$	\$
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	\$	\$
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	\$	\$
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$

If the county's allocation was not fully claimed, please explain.

**Service Delivery**

Please check the types of prevention, aftercare services and supports provided with STOP funds.

- Mental Health related services \_\_\_\_\_
- Alcohol and Drug related services \_\_\_\_\_
- Public Health related services \_\_\_\_\_
- Child Welfare & Family reunification services \_\_\_\_\_
- Probation and Juvenile Justice services \_\_\_\_\_
- Education supports and services \_\_\_\_\_
- Recreation, creative arts, after school programs \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (Please list) \_\_\_\_\_

Are STOP services (a) contracted out (b) done by county staff that time study and claim for the supports and services they delivered to consumers enrolled in STOP, or (c) both? Circle one:    a        b        c.

What types of providers were paid with STOP funds? Include the types of services and supports each delivered.

Types of Providers	Types of Services	Types of Supports

**Cost Avoidance or Savings**

Where were the children and youth living when they were enrolled into STOP?

Total number in group homes \_\_\_\_\_  
Total number in Juvenile Hall \_\_\_\_\_  
Total number in Foster Family Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Total number at home \_\_\_\_\_

During this reporting period, how many STOP children and youth returned and remained at home for more than 6 months? \_\_\_\_

During this reporting period, how many children and youth involved in STOP avoided placement and remained at home? \_\_\_\_

Does the county have a maximum amount of STOP funds that can be spent on a child?  
Check one.  yes  no

If yes, what is that amount and how was it determined? \$\_\_\_\_\_

What was the average cost per child involved in STOP last fiscal year? \$\_\_\_\_\_

What is the estimated amount of cost avoidance or savings realized via STOP?  
\$\_\_\_\_\_

*(Cost saving may have been realized through shorter lengths of stay in group home or foster care, diversion from out of home placement and the like. Exact dollar amounts may not be available. You may just report reduction in time spent in out of home placement etc.)*

**County STOP Goals**

On a separate sheet, identify the current county goals for STOP and if any were accomplished during this reporting period.

**Contact Information**

If you have questions or comments about this report please contact Patrick Kelliher at (916) 323-9707 or by e-mail at [Patrick.Kelliher@dss.ca.gov](mailto:Patrick.Kelliher@dss.ca.gov).

Please send the annual report to the following address by October 15<sup>th</sup> of each year:

Patrick A. Kelliher, STOP Liaison  
Early Intervention Unit  
Child Welfare Services Bureau MS, 19-87  
California Department of Social Services  
744 P Street  
Sacramento, California 95814.

## SUPPORTIVE AND THERAPEUTIC OPTIONS PROGRAM (STOP) COUNTY PLAN OUTLINE

Counties participating in the Supportive and Therapeutic Options Program must submit to CDSS a new or updated county plan by June 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. The plan must follow the STOP guidelines outlined in ACL 98-03 and incorporate the goals listed on the signed county STOP agreement with the State. When writing the plan, please identify the following points:

1. The date the county initiated the STOP program.
2. The projected number of prevention and aftercare children and youth to be served in the upcoming fiscal year. Please list 18-19 year olds separately.
3. The individuals, committees, and agencies that will be implementing the plan.
4. Any significant changes or planned changes in the county's STOP plan.
5. Projected amount of STOP funds that will be claimed in the upcoming fiscal year.
6. The amount of county matching funds and its source(s).
7. Parent and STOP consumer involvement in program planning and input.
8. The activities and services that will be provided by the STOP program.

Please send a hard copy of the county STOP plan to the following address:

Patrick Kelliher, STOP Liaison  
Early Intervention Unit  
Child Welfare Services Bureau  
California Department of Social Services  
744 P Street, MS 19-87  
Sacramento, California 95814

You may also elect to e-mail the plan to [Patrick.Kelliher@dss.ca.gov](mailto:Patrick.Kelliher@dss.ca.gov).  
If you have any questions or need assistance you may call him at (916) 323-9707.